

GREEN NEW DEAL FOR CAMPUS CAMPAIGN GUIDEBOOK



**CAMPUS
CLIMATE
NETWORK**



**SUNRISE
MOVEMENT**



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INTRODUCTION

What is the Green New Deal?

The Green New Deal is a plan to stop the climate crisis and create millions of good paying jobs in the process. It is a vision to transform America, dramatically cut greenhouse gas emissions, end reliance on fossil fuels, and invest in Black, brown, and working class communities. It is the only plan to address climate change at the speed

and scale that science and justice demand. The Green New Deal is a vision of the world we've always dreamed of, the world we deserve.

There are four tenets of the Green New Deal:

1. End our reliance on fossil fuels (decarbonization).
2. Create millions of good paying union jobs.
3. Invest in Black, brown and working-class communities.
4. Build out our public sector & social safety net so everyone benefits from the clean energy transition.

On a federal level, this means putting millions of people to work building a nationwide clean energy grid (think solar, wind, and geothermal), investing in public transportation (think buses, metros, and high-speed trains), ending all coal, oil, and natural gas operations and retraining fossil fuel workers for better-paying union jobs, expanding Medicare coverage to all Americans, creating free childcare and public college, building sustainable affordable housing and schools, promoting no till agriculture, returning native lands to native hands, and more.

Though a resolution to create a Green New Deal has been introduced into Congress and numerous Green New Deal policies have been passed across the country, the Green New Deal is not a single bill or resolution. It is a vision for the total transformation of American society to rise to the challenge that the climate crisis presents and build a more equitable world for all. It is a vision for a livable future in which every person has a right to clean air and water, protection from climate disasters, and safe environments for the people we love.

Learn more about the Green New Deal at sunrisemovement.org/green-new-deal.

What is a Green New Deal for Campus?

A Green New Deal for Campus reimagines the relationship between students, staff, faculty, and members of the surrounding community with administrations. It is a vision to make colleges and universities the best versions of themselves, made by students, staff, and faculty. Recognizing that all colleges and universities are unique and have diverse needs, there are no centralized demands for a Green New Deal for Campus campaign. A Green New Deal for Campus simply must address each of the four Green New Deal tenets:

1. **End reliance on fossil fuels (decarbonization):** College campuses must completely discontinue all use of coal, oil, and natural gas. This should include total decarbonization and may also include divestment and disassociation from the fossil fuel industry, and community clean energy projects.
2. **Create millions of good paying union jobs:** Colleges and universities should provide for their employees. This may include paying livable wages and benefits, unionization, employee housing, and infrastructure investments on-campus.
3. **Invest in Black, brown, and working-class communities:** For too long, these communities have been left out of the benefits of academia. Colleges and universities must increase diversity in faculty and staff, address and repair historic racism and institutional oppression, be good neighbors in the communities in which they exist, and become more affordable and democratic in nature.

4. **Build out the public sector & social safety net:** Public and private colleges and universities must be more accessible to surrounding communities and should invest in the public good. This may include addressing off-campus housing shortages, improving public transportation, building or preserving green spaces, providing homeless services, etc.

Why Do Our Campuses Need Green New Deal Campaigns?

Chicano pride, civil rights, feminism, Black power, an end to war and apartheid, unionization, accessibility, environmental protection, gay liberation, dreamers—for the last century, campus organizers have been at the forefront of nearly every major movement for social progress. The climate crisis is no different. From the founding of Sunrise Movement at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst to the massive school strikes of 2019 to successful divestment campaigns at New York University, the University of California system, Oregon State, and dozens more, college students have tremendous power to end the fossil fuel industry's social license to operate and advance revolutionary politics as we work to win a livable future for all. The student climate movement is now shifting towards broader change around climate justice.

Nevertheless, despite recent progress, colleges and universities, especially those being organized for climate justice, remain extremely segregated and exclusive of poor and working class people. Campaigns that fail to focus on system-wide change or do not seek to address the climate crisis within the communities in which our campuses are located ultimately limit their own ability to advance social progress and hinder the environmental justice movement's commitment to building a world that finally works for working people. Rather than shielding some of society's most privileged individuals from the moral burden of the climate crisis, we need bold collegiate climate campaigns that will help us secure wins on the national and global scale while simultaneously improving the lives of everyone who interacts with our campuses. Green New Deal for Campus campaigns across the country seek to achieve that in the following ways:

- **Unified:** Decentralized campaigns across the country with similar goals for decarbonization, social justice, and public sector expansion present a unified front to federal and global decision makers showing the world that young people want a Green New Deal.
- **Bold:** With less than 10 years to change the way we power everything, we cannot address the climate crisis in a piecemeal fashion. Green New Deal campaigns with a well-thought-out optimistic slate of demands for a college or university will win bigger change than incremental single-issue campaigns and will advance the public narrative that our approach to the climate crisis must be transformational in nature.
- **Equity-focused:** Climate action that fails to address the role the climate crisis plays in exacerbating the existing crises of racism, colonialism, sexism, imperialism, and economic exploitation that have plagued our country since before its founding will not help us build a livable future. Beyond decarbonization, a Green New Deal for Campus means ensuring that the benefits of academia are shared with all who live near or work on campus. This includes livable workers compensation, reinvestments in local communities, emphasis on building more diverse student bodies, and increase in public access to university services and amenities.

These interventions will increase the effectiveness of your campus climate organizing while having ancillary implications in the fight for a better future across the country and the world.

Why Run a Campus Campaign?

Colleges and Universities have historically been on the forefront of social change. Your campaign will inspire long-term advocacy, raise public awareness, and build and educate new leaders in the process. As students, we hold more leverage over our university's decision makers (presidents, boards of trustees, etc.) than we do over federal lawmakers and other decision makers. When we win at the university-level, the impact is felt beyond campus. When universities act, other social institutions follow suit. For example, universities were among the first to divest from South African Apartheid. In this sense, student activists and campus campaigns are at the tip of the spear of social change. Winning a Green New Deal on campus brings us closer to winning a national Green New Deal. So, what are you waiting for? Let's build a future we want to live in! Let's win a Green New Deal!

Student Group Status

Do you already have a student group on campus that is ready to start a Green New Deal campaign? If so, this guide will lead you through how to do so. If you do not have a group on campus that is ready to start a Green New Deal campaign, here are some resources on how to do so.

- [Fossil Free USA: How to Build a Team](#)
- [Sunrise: Recruitment for New Hubs](#)
- [350: Building an Effective Team](#)

STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

Doing Your Research

A good campaign starts with a solid backbone of research. Research allows you to know what you're up against, understand what channels to go through to fight it, and provide your campaign with a credible foundation. Your goal is to better understand your *campus landscape* (campus stakeholders, targets, how decisions are made) and then *flesh out your vision* for the campus you want to end with.

While you might be inclined to think that research for a campaign is akin to research for a class project, it doesn't need to be! Research for your campaign can look like...

- **Visioning sessions** with stakeholder groups on campus.
- **Reading** on existing campus commitments, current campus policies, and historical precedent.

- **Collecting data** on financial ties between your campus and the fossil fuel industry.
- **Attending existing meetings or events** related to sustainability on and off campus.

Research is also not only limited to the beginning of your campaign. As you move forward with developing your demands and your strategy, also continue to build your understanding of university policy and your community's vision for how to change that policy.

Visioning Sessions

One of, if not the first step in your campaign should be to hold visioning sessions to envision what your campus should look like and how you can make it so. Start with outreach to community members like staff, faculty, student groups, community leaders, local Indigenous nations, etc. to get their perspectives on what the most pressing issues are. You do not need everyone at the table to write the GND policy platform, but it is important that a variety of voices are heard and incorporated into your campaign. You are also able to get people in your community excited about the prospect of a GND and get their buy-in or even bring them into the movement.

For a template on how to hold visioning sessions, look [here](#).

Reading & Data Collection

Before making your demands, it's super important to understand where your campus already stands in relation to the fossil fuel industry – both in its commitments and *in its follow through* on those commitments. This will allow you to understand where to apply pressure, help you build your demands, and prepare you for internal meetings with administrators. You can find this through resources online, through speaking with key stakeholders, and through looking at your university's archives. Check out our “[Doing Your Research](#)” section for a whole guide on this!

Attending Existing Meetings & Events

Not everything about university policy is reflected through online materials and documents. To get an up-to-date pulse on how your campus is making and moving forward with its existing commitments, attend meetings or events hosted by relevant administrators and stakeholders. These may look like...

- Open committee meetings by decision-making bodies or other relevant groups.
- Events hosted by an Office of Sustainability, Career Center, Investment Office, etc.
- Open office hours with relevant administrators or departments.

Power Mapping

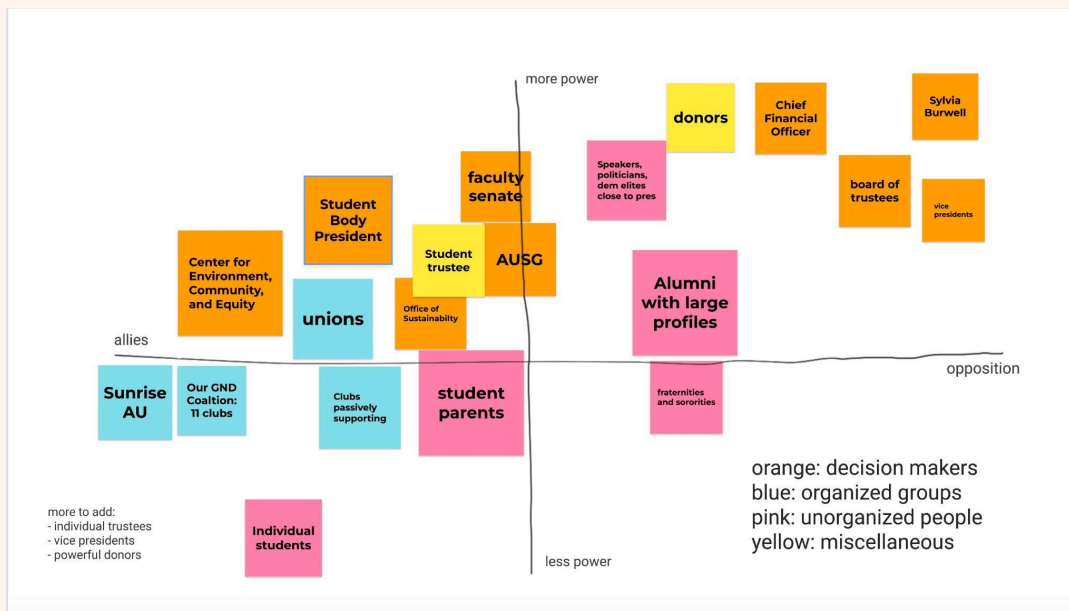
To make effective change on your campus, you must identify who holds the power and who are potential allies. This requires extensive research on your school's power structure via power mapping.

- Who makes the decisions about priorities, money, direction, etc. at your school?
- Who is on your school's board of trustees?

- Who is the President? Who are their closest colleagues in the administration? *Tip: find an up-to-date org chart for your school's administration.*
- Which administrators are most accountable to or involved with the student body?
- Who are the deans?
- Is there a student government or faculty governing body? Who are the leaders in those bodies?
- KEY: What power do all of these people or bodies have?

Use that research to create a power map of different players and where they stand on a GND.

Here's an example of a power map made for the Green New Deal for AU



Note: Consider secondary targets, eg. people who have influence over the decision makers you want to move. At a university, this could be administrators, staff, donors, student government leaders, or others who might be easier for you to target, but who if aligned with your demands could use their influence to pressure decisionmakers to change policies.

Creating Your Demands

Now that you have a better understanding of what your campus is up to and what other members of your campus community would want to see changed, it's time to solidify your vision for a campus Green New Deal. Go to the [GND Policy Section](#) to learn how to research and write your GND policy platform and pick the demands for your campaign.

Plan Your Strategy

“Power properly understood is nothing but the ability to achieve purpose. It is the strength required to bring about social, political and economic change.” – Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

We run Green New Deal for Campus campaigns because the policies implemented by the current power holders are not serving us and our communities. To win the changes we want to see, we have to build enough power to govern around our demands. We must convince the public to side with our movement, not the status quo. We then demonstrate our power to decision makers and use our leverage to win the material changes we want. Strategy informs our campaigns and enables us to design goals, tactics, and a timeline that will move our targets and win.

Ground in overall goal and demand

Once your team has decided on what demands you’re organizing for, identify your campaign’s specific goals. These will inform the strategy you use to force decision makers to implement a GND. Use these questions to brainstorm with your team and write down the answers somewhere easy for the team to access.

- What would a win for your campaign look like? *Examples could be: create broad public support for a GND, build a base of active organizers grounded in a strategy for a GND, win X policy from your university’s board of trustees.*
- What policies do you want to see passed by decision makers?
- What is wrong with the current policies? How do they need to change?

Picking your targets

Once you have your goal, figure out which people at your school are best positioned to make the changes you want to see. This requires extensive research on your school’s power structure through power mapping. See this guide’s section on [power mapping](#).

Timeline and Escalation

Now that you know who your targets are and what your goals are, make a timeline to guide your campaign. At universities, it is helpful to structure your timeline by semester and year. Make a timeline with moments of intervention, tactics you plan to use during them, and an escalation arc. Remember, campaigns often don’t stick to a timeline because of other events or conditions that may come up and that’s okay. It’s really about having an arc guiding everyone in the same strategic direction toward the same end goal.

Moments of intervention are times when decisions are made by power holders that affect the policies of your institution. Examples could be a board meeting, student government elections, etc. These are important because it’s an opportunity to change the course of the decisions being made and demand an alternative to the status quo.

Tactics are actions that help your campaign build power and wield that power in order to win material changes. They do this in many ways. Here are some examples of different styles of tactics. A combination of these makes a strong campaign!

- **Hyper-visible actions.** Think [Sunrise's 2018 Pelosi sit-in](#). These actions expose the injustice of current policies. They present an alternative vision, and call on the public to pick a side: stick with the status quo that's not serving them or support the movement for a better world. When done well, they attract new members who see the action and get involved. *Examples: civil disobedience, sit-ins, occupations, rallies.*
- **1:1 recruitment.** Examples are tabling, canvassing, and 1:1 conversations. They present the same message as hyper-visible actions, but through interpersonal conversations where members make hard asks of people to join the movement.
- **Trainings** equip members of the movement with knowledge and skills to build power for your campaign. They can range from onboarding trainings that introduce new members to the movement to training members to take specific actions and more.
- **Petitions** collect signatures of people who support a movement's demands and are a tangible way to quantify how many people want change, as well as give people an easy first action to take.
- **Mobilizations.** Think the March to End Fossil Fuels or the 2017 Women's March. These turn out your members and people who support the movement. The goal is often to demonstrate to policymakers the large numbers of people who want to see change. *Examples: mass rallies, marches.*
- **Elections, referendums, and resolutions.** Campaigns can use a ballot referendum to show how many students support its demands, and can run a slate of candidates in student government on the movement's demands. They can also whip votes to pass a resolution in student government calling for a Green New Deal to use as leverage for your campaign.

Strategic Escalation. Movements rarely win material change by using one tactic over and over again. Escalation arcs usually start with lower-risk actions like canvassing and trainings to build a base of members, and then deploy higher-risk or more intense actions later to recruit more people and demonstrate the power of the movement. When thinking about what actions to put where, use the following questions:

- What tactics will be most effective to engage in during certain moments of intervention?
- Which ones can be deployed consistently for a longer period of time?
- What power or leverage do YOU as students or community members have over the decision makers? How do you demonstrate this to people in power?

How to build a campaign timeline

- ❖ Step 1: **Gather a meeting with your campaign team.** You'll need a whiteboard and sticky notes. Assign someone to take notes on a google doc as well.
- ❖ Step 2: As a group, **review your campaign goals.** Now get specific: what things do you want to accomplish at the end of the semester vs the end of the academic year? Write it down!
- ❖ Step 3: On the white board, draw an arrow for a **timeline.** Label key time markers like months.

- ❖ Step 4: Ask the group, what are key **movements of intervention**? Have people write these on sticky notes and put them up on the timeline.
- ❖ Step 5: **Brainstorm tactics**. Spend time individually writing down different tactics your organization could be used on sticky notes. Once people are done, have them share out what they wrote. Have everyone go around and share out their tactics (and record them in the notes) before discussing. This gives you a menu of options to pull from when creating your arc of escalation.
- ❖ Step 6: Look at your timeline again and think about how you want to escalate throughout the semester and year. **Arrange the sticky notes on your timeline** to visualize where different actions will fall.

Launch Your Campaign

There are lots of ways to launch a campaign successfully. Often groups will do a soft launch and a public launch shortly after. A soft launch could be when your group agrees to do a GND campaign and starts organizing canvassing, tabling, and trainings to organize people into your base. A public launch is more visible and might consist of a petition delivery, a hyper-visible disruptive action, a rally, or another action that can propel your demands into the public's view.

Build Campus Support

An important step in your campaign is building campus support with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members. You can use the [circles of commitment](#) as a model of engagement for your campaign.

Coalition Building

In order to have a successful GND campaign, we must organize across [race](#) and [class](#). The GND is an intersectional campaign, so utilize the role of mutual aid in collaborating with others towards the common goal of a GND. Getting big numbers on your side is essential; however, strategic outreach to grow your base across race and class should be priority. Your campaign needs long-term support that goes beyond a mere transaction to build a sustainable coalition to demonstrate public support whether through institutional and/or [people power](#). Coalition building should be done in a democratic way where everyone's voice at the table is valued. This is also a good way to build connections and get people to see their stake in your GND campaign.

Working with Faculty

Faculty can play a key role in pushing university administration to adopt a campus Green New Deal. Faculty leverage will look different depending on the decision-making structures at your university (i.e. faculty senate, unions, etc.). Within these existing structures, individual faculty members will hold varying levels of power depending on their individual positions, their connection with other faculty members or members of the administration, and the roles they hold outside of their capacity as a faculty member. Faculty members also

possess valuable knowledge on the inner working bureaucracy of the university that are often inaccessible to students.

Many factors may influence a faculty member's decision to publicly support and/or organize for a Green New Deal for Campus. These include whether or not they have tenure, previous actions taken by their department, and whether or not they have a personal stake in the campaign. For example, an untenured professor may only be willing to sign on to your campaign anonymously. In the context of all of these factors, *personal relationships matter*. Faculty members are generally more willing to support and/or organize for your campaign if they have a strong relationship with someone on your team.

When talking to faculty, you may ask them to...

- Sign and share **petitions** calling for the adoption of your Green New Deal platform.
- **Send an email** to send to specific administration officials in support of your Green New Deal platform. Be sure to provide them with a template and/or list of talking points in advance!
- **Make a large pledge or commitment** such as to refuse research money from the fossil fuel industry, include climate in their syllabi, or pledge to take some other action to pressure your administration to adopt a Green New Deal. This is a bit of a larger ask than a petition. Wait until you reach a critical mass of pledges (ex. 100) until names are made public. Faculty members are more likely to make bold commitments when they know they aren't alone.
- Share a petition, pledge, and/or campaign materials with **larger faculty networks and organizations**.

To build a broader base of faculty support, it may be helpful to **find a faculty champion** who can not only organize their colleagues, but push for your campaign in larger faculty decision-making bodies. You may want to look for champions in different departments, as well as champions with larger faculty decision-making structures such as a Faculty Senate.

Working with Staff

It is important to work with the staff on your campus, especially if your campus has unionized staff members. Reach out to your campus YDSA for best practices to work with staff on your campus.

Working with Alumni

Alumni hold significant leverage in the larger university ecosystem, especially (unsurprisingly) if they are also large donors. Working with alumni will look different depending on what your demands are, and how you're asking for their support.

It's also worth noting that the role of recent alumni is different from the role of older alumni. While recent alumni may be more inclined to support your campaign and organize an alumni base, older alumni may hold more financial leverage with university administration and potentially be harder to reach. It's important to build support from all different types of alumni and provide asks for each of them that suit their role.

Ways to reach alumni:

- Personal connections (i.e. legacy student parents, university events, etc.).
- Networking and career events.
- Online alumni connection platforms.
- Update your alumni list each year as seniors graduate

When talking to alumni, you may ask them to...

- Sign and share **petitions** calling for the adoption of your Green New Deal platform.
- **Send an email** to send to specific administration officials in support of your Green New Deal platform. Be sure to provide them with a template and/or list of talking points in advance!
- **Make a large pledge or commitment** such as to withhold donations, boycott events, or pledge to take some other action to pressure your administration to adopt a Green New Deal. This is a bit of a larger ask than a petition.
- Share a petition, pledge, and/or campaign materials with **larger alumni networks and organizations** (i.e. class email listservs, class Facebook pages, Greek life networks, etc.).
- Publish an article or mention of your Green New Deal for Campus campaign in an **alumni magazine** or other alumni-specific publication.

Claim Victory and Go Bigger

Why Claim Victory?

For any movement, conveying a sense of forward progress is essential. Everybody likes to be on a winning team, and student movements are no different. It is important that your movement communicates the campaign's success both to your own members and to the rest of your campus community (and even beyond!). You are often asking members of your group to invest large amounts of time and energy into working toward your shared goals. The organizers within your movement want to see that their time and effort is not all for nothing, that it is successfully moving your campaign forward. Declaring victory and conveying a sense of forward progress is key to keeping students and members involved. People want to see that they are taking part in meaningful action! Communicating your victories to those on your campus outside of those already involved in your movement is also key, as it could help bring more people into your organization, allowing you to scale up your organizing and have a greater capacity to stage actions, recruit new members, and develop leaders.

Methods of Claiming Victory

While winning your concrete demands is the most obvious point at which you can and should declare victory, there are many other ways to claim your victory. In fact, because you should be declaring victory as a method to expand and maintain the power of your movement, the truth is that declaring victory will most often not look like claiming victory over your institution completely adopting the demands of your movement.

- 1) **Declare victory when demands are symbolically met, or met in principle.**

Does your campus agree to divestment? Do they make a commitment to paying campus workers a living wage? Does your student government pass a Green New Deal resolution with stipulations for university funding? This is the most obvious point in which you can and should declare victory. Shout your victory from the rooftop! Pitch to journalists! Send out press releases! Make sure everyone knows this win was possible thanks to YOUR movement and YOUR organizing.

Note: While your concrete demands might have not necessarily been implemented yet, that should not impede you from claiming victory. Many campaigns and movements, from the civil rights movement to campus movements declare victory when decision makers make a *symbolic* commitment to meet a movement's demands, even as the implementation or follow-through comes later.

2) **Declare victory when one or some of your demands are met.**

Don't beat yourself up just because you haven't won everything your movement demanded yet. You are up against a lot. You can claim a win even as you continue to demand more. Claiming these small victories builds momentum for your campaign, signaling to your campus community that change is possible. It might show that cracks in the administration are forming as they are beginning to bow to your demands, or it might demonstrate that student action can lead to real change.

3) **Declare victory over a successful action.**

Did half of the student body walk out on a speech by your university president? Did 10 students disrupt a meeting of the Board of Trustees, making enough noise that they were sure to hear? Did you reach 500 signatures on a petition to get a Green New Deal resolution on your student government ballot? You have had clear success in mobilizing students, for which you should claim victory. If nothing else, this communicates to those already involved in your campaign that all the time and energy they are putting in is having an impact.

4) **Declare victory when you increase your base/power/capacity as a movement.**

"Movements are born of critical connections rather than critical mass." - Grace Lee Boggs

Movements lay the groundwork for the environment that facilitates future victories even if they don't win their goals. Take more people attending meetings, more traction on your social media platforms, or adding 10 people to your communication platform as a win! More people, more power.

Example:

The University of Florida passes a Green New Deal Resolution through its student government. Even as the resolution was yet to be implemented and receive final approval from the University's board of trustees, organizers with the campaign for a Green New Deal for UF declared victory. The campaign put out a post on Instagram, interviewed with the Guardian, which resulted in an article titled "[University of Florida student senate passes 'Green New Deal'](#)", and talked to other student organizers from across the country about how they got their victory!



Plan for Next Win

Capitalize on your victory by recruiting new organizers

So you've won! Congrats! The first step is capitalizing on your victory to bring more people into your movement. Maybe host an event where you celebrate and explain the arc of your campaign and how you secured this victory. Others on your campus might see your success, want to be a part of meaningful action, and join you! Growing your movement and base of active organizers means that you can organize and build more victories down the line.

Run it back: How did you get here?

Debrief as a campaign. Get everyone in a room and discuss how you got your victory. What were the key actions you took that led to your success? Where were the areas you struggled and could have done better? Celebrate what you did well. Reflect on what you didn't. Key to this debrief is a power analysis where you map the alliances and allies that helped you win, pinpoint the actions that put pressure on your targets, and consider the role of your base of active and passive supporters in getting you here.

Plan next steps

Use the institutional knowledge you gained in your campaign, the relationships you built, and the momentum from your victory to launch your next campaign. This doesn't have to happen immediately. Take time to conduct an analysis of your capacity, your resources, and the power structures you are up against; get buy-in from those involved in your previous campaign, your allies, and others in your campus community.

Connect to national movements and efforts

You are not running your Green New Deal campaign in a vacuum. There are so many others around the country and all over the world organizing under the banner of a Green New Deal. Whether it is other folks organizing for a Green New Deal resolution in their city council, other college students organizing for a Green New Deal for their campus, or those leading the fight for elements of a Green New Deal at the state and national levels, there are so many others out there beside you! As you plan for next steps after your win, connect with others similarly fighting for a better future. Communicate your win to those fighting alongside you; there might be things that others can learn from your campaign to win their own.

Public vs Private Schools

Whether you attend a public or private institution will affect how you run your Green New Deal campaign; Your institution type can determine public access to information, student body makeup, and the regulations your university must comply with. Here are some specific factors to consider in your campaign:

Private Schools

Transparency may be more difficult

Since most private universities do not have to adhere to State open record laws, transparency may be more difficult because some information is not legally required to be publicly disclosed. If your private university receives federal funding, this may look a bit different. You may have to use nontraditional methods to find

information such as meeting with faculty and staff to find the answers you are looking for. For more on disclosure laws, look [here](#).

Smaller and rely on tuition dollars

Private universities tend to be smaller and have students from a wide range of geographic locations. Use this to your advantage! With a smaller student body and different perspectives, you can more easily put effort into making deeper connections. Private universities also rely on tuition and endowments rather than federal and state money. This gives you lots of power as students, their main sources of income, to use as leverage and push for your demands.

Taxes

Private, non-profit universities are exempt from property tax and other taxes, so they often impoverish the government of the municipality in which they are located. By making payments to their local city government, called PILOTs (Payments In-Lieu of Taxes) they can help make up for this. [Here's](#) an example of this at Brown University.

Less integrated into their communities

Private institutions are typically less integrated in the communities in which they are located. They need to find a way to advocate in solidarity with their surrounding communities without overwhelming or taking over existing organizing.

Public Schools

Have larger, have a less-involved, more cross-class student bodies

This can make it harder to organize students and demonstrate mass support for the Green New Deal. Look into programs such as [Sunrise Movement's Principle 6 stipends](#), which support organizers' living expenses so that they can sustain their organizing. Because public college and university boards are often more conservative than private ones, you can also lean into the progressive students vs. conservative administration dynamic that takes place on many campuses to rally support among the student body for a Green New Deal.

Are more integrated in the communities where they are located

Can leverage support from local elected officials, community environmental organizations, political parties, etc. to apply pressure on your board of trustees.

Are more regulated by state governments

Many conservative states have [banned government institutions from ESG investing](#), making divestment more [difficult](#) to win. There may be formal processes the university Boards have to abide by that may limit or slow the implementation of a Green New Deal. Before you take your fight to your Board of Trustees, you should review relevant regulations and powers of the Board and ensure that your demands are within the Board's scope.

Are required to operate with greater transparency

Public universities are far more accountable to the public than their private counterparts. This means it can be easy to attract media attention from larger newspapers and you can actually attend and typically testify at Board of Trustees meetings.

Open Meetings

The actions of public college and university boards are governed by state **open meeting laws**, which require that all non-confidential government business is kept open to the public. In most states, open meeting law requires that (1) board meeting agendas are published several days before board meetings, (2) boards meetings can be attended by members of the public, and (3) meeting notes are kept and are made available to the public after a board meeting. You can view your state's open meeting laws [here](#).

Public Records

The business of public university Boards is also governed by your state's **public records laws**, which require that all information related to the non-confidential business of local governments is available for request by members of the public. This information includes emails, texts, electronic and paper documents, salaries, bank statements, receipts, phone and email lists, video and audio recordings or transcripts, etc. Public colleges and universities must respond to records requests and make information available in a timely manner. Most states require that public colleges and universities provide this information free of charge for a certain number of hours that it takes a staff member (typically the institution's legal counsel) to find this information, then the requester may be charged for each additional hour. For this reason, it may be wise to have different members of your group make records requests for different sets of information in order to stay below the time threshold. View your state's public record laws [here](#).

Here is how [Ballotpedia](#) recommends going about a public records request:

1. *Begin by drafting a public records request letter. You may draft your own professional letter or use a template such as the [Student Press Law Center letter generator](#) or one of the [National Freedom of Information Coalition sample letters](#). Specify the time frame of the records you are asking for, as well as the record type.*
2. *Contact the FOIA liaison or records custodian at the public entity from which you seek records and let them know that you want to submit a public records request.*
 1. *If you have trouble finding a contact, get in touch with departments that deal with the public and information management, such as recorders, clerks, external affairs, communication departments, and main offices.*
 2. *Confirm with the liaison how you should submit your request. It is possible that the liaison may tell you that the records you are interested in are available without needing to submit a records request.*
 3. *Ask the liaison what happens after you submit your request. Keep the liaison's contact information in case you need to follow up with any questions.*
3. *Review and submit your request.*

4. Once you receive a reply to your request, review it and follow up with any questions.

For additional support submitting Freedom of Information requests, reach out to the research team at Campus Climate Network (info@campusclimatenetwork.org)

Campaign Finance Reporting

Elected officials and candidates for elected office, including many public college or university boards are required to report contributions made to their campaigns. Each state has different requirements for reporting that can be viewed [here](#). Though, in most states, Board races are low-dollar and grassroots funded, in larger cities, special interest groups, including fossil fuel companies, contribute to Board candidates. By viewing candidates' campaign finance reports, you can ascertain whether they are upholding their Green New Deal pledge and you can call them out on conflicts of interest.

Usually have more research opportunities

This means that there may be funding for you to conduct a deep dive into your school's history, fossil fuel ties, and opportunities for climate action. Reach out to professors and environment, public policy, and urban planning departments to see if they have grant money lying around that they can use to stipend your work.

GND POLICY: WHAT CAN YOU DEMAND ON CAMPUS?

Doing Your Research

University Climate Commitments & Progress

Before making demands for more action on the climate emergency, you must be well-versed in the action your institution has already taken on climate. There are several ways to find this information:

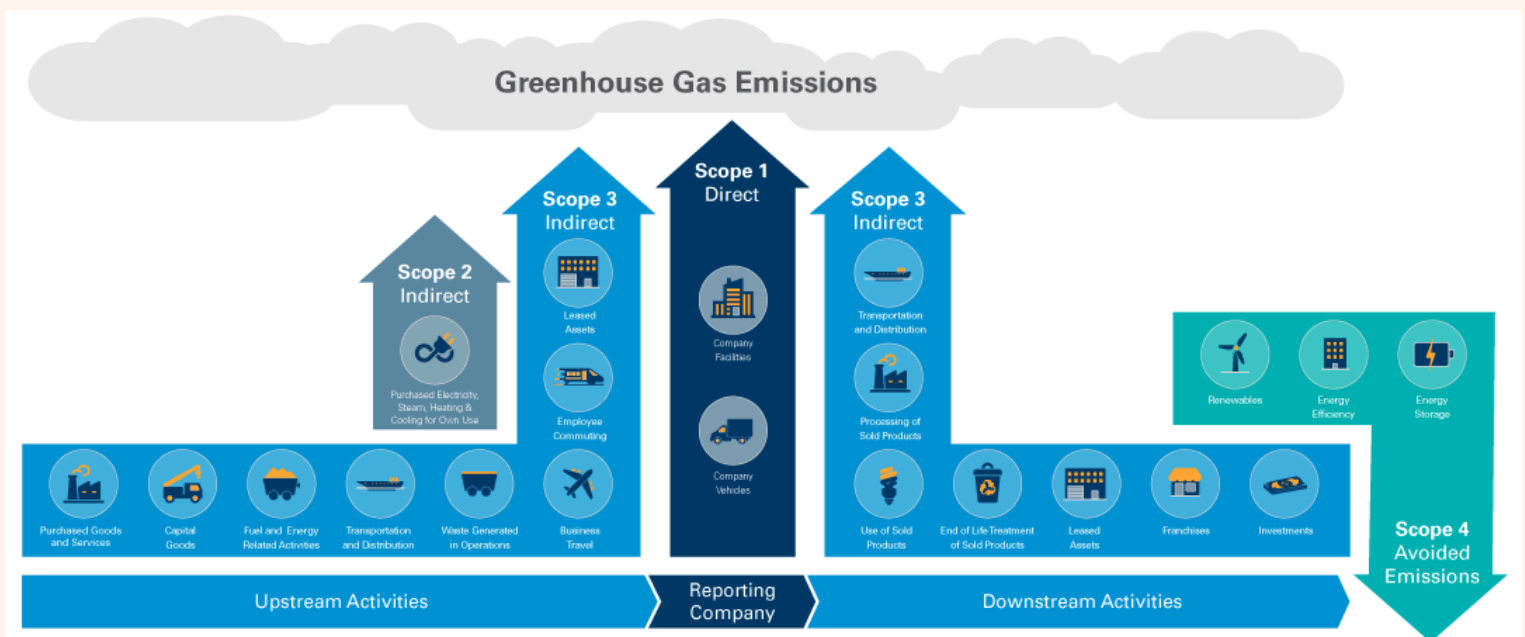
Sustainability Plans

Most universities have climate action plans or sustainability plans with emissions reduction targets and progress monitoring. Find these plans (typically comes up if you Google [your university] + "sustainability plan"). As you read this document consider the following:

- **Emissions scope** — There are four scopes of emissions calculations:
 - **Scope 1:** Emissions from sources that an organization owns or controls directly. For example, from burning fossil fuels in a university-owned fleet of vehicles.
 - **Scope 2:** Emissions that a company causes indirectly and come from where the energy it purchases and uses is produced. For example, the emissions caused when generating the electricity used in university facilities.

- **Scope 3:** Emissions that are not produced by the company itself and are not the result of activities from assets owned or controlled by them but by those that it's indirectly responsible for up and down its value chain. For example, the emissions from concrete poured by a construction company to build a new university building or the cars students and staff drive to and from campus.
- **Scope 4 (rare):** Reductions in emissions that occur as a result of the use of a product or service. For example, research at your university into more efficient building insulation materials or climate standards for major university contractors that force a construction company to electrify its entire vehicle fleet, including vehicles that aren't used for university-related services.

Determine the scope of emissions that your university is taking to account in its climate action plan. If it is not including scope 3 emissions, the plan is BS!



- **Carbon neutrality commitments** — Carbon neutrality means producing no more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than are offsetted such that there is no net release of GHG to the atmosphere.
 - With current technologies, it's extremely difficult to achieve carbon neutrality without offsets. Typically institutions offset their carbon emissions by purchasing carbon credits or creating carbon offsets (e.g. ecosystem restoration, tree planting). These actions are generally regarded as false solutions and do not actually pull a significant amount of additional carbon from the atmosphere. Read your institution's plan to ensure that it includes far more than just offsetting the current "carbon footprint" of its operations.
 - Check which greenhouse gasses emissions pledges encompass. Often, universities define carbon neutrality to include carbon dioxide but not methane, nitrous oxide, or hydrofluorocarbons, which are more potent greenhouse gasses.
- **Clean electricity commitments:** "Clean" electricity comes from sources other than fossil fuels. It's important to know how an institution is achieving this goal:

- Local power generation means that the institution installs renewable electricity sources (solar, wind, geothermal, etc.) on-campus and uses the power to run its building or is counting the carbon reduction provided to the grid from these sources as proportional to the fossil fuel sourced electricity from the local utility. This is the ideal means by which an institution can achieve its clean electricity commitments.
- **Power purchase agreements (PPA)** mean that the institution has paid a local utility to build renewable electricity generation on its behalf. This means that the electricity going to the university is actually clean. A PPA allows the customer to receive stable and often low-cost electricity with no upfront cost, while also enabling the owner of the system to take advantage of tax credits and receive income from the sale of electricity.



The University of Pennsylvania negotiated a PPA with their local utility, Community Energy, building the largest solar array in that state. The project supplements all energy consumption by the school, reducing its carbon emissions 45% and resulting in the institution meeting its Paris Accords targets seven years early. According to its Climate & Sustainability Action Plan 3.0, the University of Pennsylvania seeks to achieve a 100% carbon neutrality by 2042.

- **Renewable energy credits (RECs)** mean that the institution has paid a utility generating renewable electricity somewhere in the country to certify that the electricity provided to the university is clean. This results in **double claiming** and means that the clean electricity claims are unsubstantiated.
- **Clean energy commitments:** “Clean” energy means powering all energy-using college or university operations (e.g. electricity, heating, transportation, cooking) without using fossil fuels. This typically involves **electrifying** energy-using sectors (e.g. replacing natural gas stoves with electric stoves in the kitchen) and increasing clean electricity generation. Clean energy commitments necessitate clean electricity commitments.
- **Time-bound commitments and interim targets:** Without time bounds, there is no accountability for the institution to actually do anything with its climate action plan. The plan should establish 10-25-year commitments and interim 1-5-year goals to make progress on these commitments. Additionally, the plan should mandate regular greenhouse gas emissions audits and reevaluation of the plan (not the commitments) based on progress made.
- **Environmental justice:** The way climate commitments are achieved matters. How is your institution investing in the community it's physically located in? How is it ensuring that the transition to clean energy is being powered by well-paying union jobs?
 - The university's sustainability plan should have been written with significant input from students, faculty and staff, and community members.
 - Groundskeepers, maintenance staff, and sustainability personnel who are implementing this plan should be paid livable wages with strong benefits.
 - The plan should recognize means to mitigate the harmful impacts of mining and processing lithium,

- cobalt, graphite, and rare earth elements that are required for solar, wind, and battery technologies.
 - Black, brown, and working class people should be prioritized. The 15% pledge commits an institution to purchasing 15% of its products from Black-owned businesses.
- **False solutions:** We have all the technology needed for academic institutions to achieve 100% clean energy today and most of the technology needed for them to achieve carbon neutrality. Nevertheless, many university sustainability plans are over reliant on technologies that are not yet usable at commercial scale to achieve their climate goals. These include:
 - **Carbon capture, storage and sequestration** (e.g. Direct Air Capture): It is likely that, in order to stay below 1.5°C of warming, we will have to artificially remove carbon from the atmosphere. However, this is a highly energy intensive and expensive task with current technology and not one we should bet the fate of the world on. Universities should reduce their emissions today, not plan on repairing their mistakes from decades past in the future with technologies unavailable today.
 - **Planting trees:** Though trees do remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and can support climate resilience on campuses by mitigating the latent urban heat island effect, a tree planted today will not mature in time to remove a significant amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by 2030. The long term carbon sequestration of a tree is unpredictable, especially if planted on a campus where it may be removed in 10 years to make space for an additional residence hall.
 - **Carbon credits:** These are unregulated in the U.S. and typically involve planting trees or purchasing forested land that is not at risk of deforestation and counting the carbon dioxide already sequestered by that land, which results in [double claiming](#) and can sometimes pose a threat to Indigenous sovereignty.
 - **Recycling, composting, and limiting single-use plastics:** These things are great, but actually have a very minimal impact on greenhouse gas emissions.
 - **Greenwashing:** If your campus advertises itself as an environmentally-conscious institution but has flaws in its climate action plan, it is greenwashing and may be causing more harm than good.
 - **Promoting individual action:** Promoting that students are mindful about climate change is important, however it is far from enough to significantly reduce emissions and avert global climatic breakdown. In fact, the carbon footprint was popularized by British Petroleum in 2005 to prevent system-wide solutions to tackle climate change.
 - **Natural gas:** It is a fossil fuel and leaks methane. Converting vehicles and HVAC to natural gas can improve air quality but will not stop the climate crisis. This is also a [false-solution](#).
 - **Solar Radiation Modification (SRM):** A geoengineering solution to climate change preferred by fossil fuel companies that relies on reflecting solar radiation back into space.

Once you understand your institution's plan to address its greenhouse gas emissions, it's time to make sure that it's actually following through on its commitments. Read the progress reports. Have they been achieving their interim goals? Are they on track to meet their commitments? If not, they need an intervention.

AASHE Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS)

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) publishes standards for sustainability on college and university campuses and certifies institutions' sustainability efforts based on a [points system](#). You can access data about your institution on university living wage payment of staff, energy sources, food sourcing, and other sustainability efforts. It's important to note that, while STARS reporting provides

valuable information about the climate action your institution has taken, the ratings are not adequately aligned with environmental justice principles or greenhouse gas reduction, so don't take a platinum STARS rating to mean that your institution has an adequately climate action plan. You can find your school's STARS report [here](#).

Fossil Fuel Ties

For decades, the college climate movement has focused their campaigns on divestment and dissociation from fossil fuels (and Zionism, weapons manufacturers, etc.). While the Green New Deal seeks a larger vision for the role colleges can play in stopping the climate crisis than solely monetary association, understanding an institution's ties with the fossil fuel industry is still key to winning a Green New Deal on your campus for three reasons:

- 1) **Polarization:** When students, families, and the public learn that their school is actively funding, profiting from, or influenced by the industry destroying their communities, livelihoods, and future, they become angry, especially if the institution has made efforts to keep these ties under wraps. By publishing this information, your campaign can build [moral authority](#) while simultaneously painting the university in a more negative light. This [polarization](#) is key to your campaign's success.
- 2) **Understanding leadership:** A university's financial and political relationship with the fossil fuel industry and its executives likely influences its decision making and has played a role in hindering climate action on campus. Understanding the specific relationships and vested interests university leadership might have in fossil fuels can help your campaign identify targets and leverage points. See the "[Picking your targets](#)" section for more information.
- 3) **Legitimacy:** As a new or less established student organization on campus, it can be difficult to demonstrate the relevance of your group. Though finding institutional fossil fuel ties is relatively easy, publishing a report about it or garnering press can establish your group as a resident third-party expert on the climate crisis. This can help with recruitment and make university leadership take your group more seriously.

There are common ways that colleges and universities are tied to the fossil fuel industry. Though finding these ties can be different at each institution, we'll briefly discuss how your campaign can research each of these items.

Fossil Fuel Holdings in Endowments

As of 2023, the total endowment market value of U.S. higher education institutions was \$839.1 billion with a median endowment value of \$215 million.¹ At most institutions, 3 to 15% of this money is directly (stocks, bonds, or private equity held by the institution) or indirectly (ownership of mutual funds or indexes holding stocks, bonds, or commodities) invested in fossil fuels. In addition to shares of fossil fuel companies and their debt, many endowments also hold fossil fuel commodities (think shares of barrels of oil and of tons of coal), which investment companies allege are used to hedge portfolios against inflation. Several studies have shown, however, that these are bad investments.²

¹ Number of U.S. Institutional Respondents to the 2023 NTSE, and Respondents' Total Endowment Market Values, by Endowment Size and Institution Type. <https://www.nacubo.org/Research/2023/Public%20NCE20Tables>.

² Semieniuk, G., Holden, P. B., Mercure, J., Salas, P., Pollitt, H., Jobson, K., Vercoulen, Chewpreecha, U., Edwards, N. R. & Vinuales, J. E. (2022). "Stranded fossil-fuel assets translate to major losses for investors in advanced economies." *Nature Climate Change*, 12 (6): 532-538

Precise reporting of endowment holdings is extremely difficult to find even at public universities. Funds are often managed by third parties¹ or shell companies to shield them from public records requests². At most institutions however, the university board of trustees has decision making authority over endowment investments. These boards typically receive an annual report of endowment portfolio performance which is publicly available and outlines asset allocations and goals by category.

Example:

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's endowment is managed by the UNC Management Company. They publish an annual fund report detailing the portfolio's performance. The report breaks fund allocations down into real estate, short equity, long equity, private equity, cash, fixed income, and energy and natural resources. The fund defines "energy and natural resources" as "oil, natural gas, power, and other commodity-related investments." Because the report states that this allocation accounts for 4.8% of its \$5.4 billion endowment portfolio, Sunrise UNC calculated that the school holds \$243 million in fossil fuel commodities. Campus organizers published a [white paper](#) detailing this on their website and sent out a [press release](#), earning them [coverage](#) in their student newspaper.

Fossil Fuel Funding of Research and Contributions to your College

The fossil fuel industry contributes hundreds of millions of dollars to academic institutions in order to maintain their [social license to operate](#) and leverage over university decision making. Fossil fuel funding biases research outcomes and allows the fossil fuel industry to set the research agenda, causing outsized academic focus on false solutions and adaptation rather than emissions reductions and environmental justice. Universities, especially public universities should serve the public, not private multi-billion-dollar corporations. Check out [this guide](#) to find out how to use research conflict of interest declarations to find your institution's fossil fuel contributions and how to determine how much money the fossil fuel industry has given directly to your institution (this is typically different from research funding). Use these tools to search across the top 200 global publicly-owned coal, oil, and gas reserve owners (list is confidential, but email shiva@sunrisemovement.org for access) and the list of the largest climate change counter-movement funders shown [here](#).

Fossil Fuel Affiliates in School Leadership

Many college or university Boards of Trustees, visitors boards, and institutional boards have members who currently or formerly were fossil fuel executives. Additionally, some university presidents and deans were themselves formerly fossil fuel executives or have significant affiliations with that industry. You sleuth these affiliations by searching individuals' names on [LittleSis](#), finding them on LinkedIn, looking at their campaign finance information, and conducting targeted Google searches.

Researching your college or university's fossil fuel ties can be daunting. Many institutions have dozens of staff or entire companies dedicated to managing endowments, fundraising, research funding, and recruitment programs. On large campuses, there are hundreds of leadership positions that are potentially filled by fossil fuel affiliates. Luckily, campus organizers across the country have years of experience doing this work. **As you begin your research, we highly recommend reaching out to Campus Climate Network's research team for advice, resources, and even grant money:**

Will Kattrup: wkattrup@campusclimatenetwork.org, Slack profile [here](#).

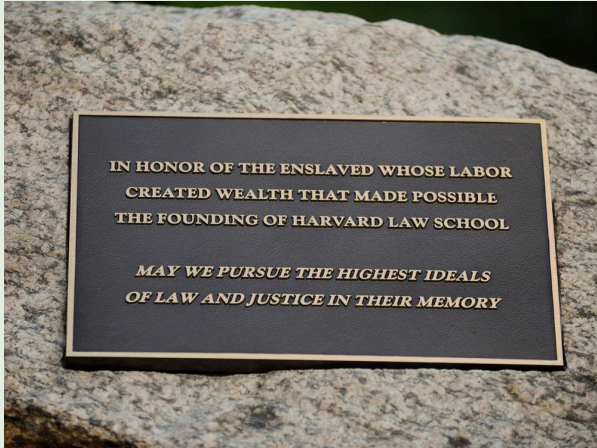
Maddie Young: myoung@campusclimatenetwork.org, Slack profile [here](#).

Equity

It's no secret that academia is a highly exclusionary space with deep roots in white supremacy and oppression. Though some recent efforts have been made to reduce inequality at some colleges and universities, it is clear that these efforts have fallen short. Additionally, the recent overturn of the use of affirmative action in college admissions threatens to roll back what progress has been made while also creating the opportunity for us to imagine a more expansive and equitable system of higher education.

Because climate justice means far more than decarbonization, understanding your institution's commitment to equity is imperative to write and win a strong GND for your campus. Here are some metrics to consider when researching equity on your campus:

- **Student homelessness & housing insecurity:** Does the institution have adequate housing accommodations for all its undergraduate students? Are students able to afford housing off-campus?
- **Student food insecurity:** Does the institution have a food pantry? Is there adequate financial aid to purchase meal plans?
- **Campus worker minimum wages:** Are they livable in the city where the institution is located?
- **Off-campus economic prosperity:** What is the difference between admitted student family incomes and the median household income in the city where the institution is located? How is the institution investing in that community?
- **Financial aid:** What portion of students are graduating with debt?
- **Faculty diversity:** Does the university have a faculty body that demographically mirrors the student body? Is there a proportional share of BIPOC in administration? Is affirmative action practiced in hiring (note that this *is* still allowed under the *Students for Fair Admissions* (2023) decision)?
- **Reparations:** Did the institution ever use enslaved labor? If so, has it paid cash reparations to the descendants of the enslaved people? Was the institution involved in the seizure of Indigenous lands or genocide of Indigenous ancestors? If so, has it given land back and paid cash reparations to the tribe(s)?



Harvard University announced in 2022 that it would set up a \$100 million endowment fund to “close the educational, social and economic gaps that are legacies of slavery and racism.” That school also will issue monetary reparations for Black and indigenous students who are descendants of the 70 people enslaved by former faculty and staff between Harvard’s founding and the banning of slavery in Massachusetts.

- **Accessibility:** Is the campus accessible to people in wheelchairs (wide, level pedestrian areas, wheelchair accessible emergency evacuation mechanisms? To blind or visually-impaired people (e.g. braille signs, tactile paving, accessible pedestrian signals, preferential seating)? To deaf or hard of hearing people (e.g. captioned media, visual fire alarm signals)?
- **Public access of campus resources:** Can the public easily acquire a library card at your institution? Are career fairs open to the public? If the institution funds a transportation system, can the public ride?



Sunrise Michigan State University is running a Green New Deal campaign to create a “truly public university.” This includes expanding bus services off-campus to make public transportation more accessible to off-campus students, staff, faculty, and community members; expanding scholarships for all Michiganders to pursue professional certification programs; and requiring community oversight for university investments.

- **Student resources:** Are there programs for first generation college students? Is there support for non-traditional students?
- **Cultural competence:** Is there adequate diversity in meal provisions to meet all diets? Are staff trained in cultural competence and implicit bias? Is there institutional funding for cultural centers?
- **Racial and ethnic bias incidents:** Are there reports of bias incidents? How does the college address them?
- **Disaggregated graduation rates:** Look at graduation rates for different student demographics like race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, first-generation status, and disability status. Identify any significant gaps.

Green New Deal Policy Platform

After doing your research into what demands fit best into your campaign, it's time to pick your demands. Your demands sit at the intersection of your team's overall vision and your research. They *outline specific steps* to get your university from where it stands today to the university that you want to build. *Assemble your demands* into a Green New Deal policy platform document that states the purpose and need for a Green New Deal on your campus which lays out and justifies each demand. This should be a formal, public-facing document that is built over many conversations, visioning sessions, and opportunities for public input.

Here are several examples of completed Green New Deal policy platforms:

[University of California Green New Deal Policy Platform](#) (Oct. 2021)

[A Green New Deal for American University Policy Platform](#) (Jan. 2023)

[The Green New Deal for University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) (Feb. 2024)

To keep in mind while picking demands:

- *Vision:* Your demands should outline a clear path to winning your overall vision. **Start from your vision and work backwards.** As a team, ask yourselves: what specific components of university operations as-is need to change to build the university that could be? How must they change?
- *Use your research:* Much of the time, your team's initial research and visioning sessions will have brought up ideas for specific demands – go back to your notes! Did a few stakeholders point to the same policy mechanism or practice that they want to see altered? Did your research reveal specific connections between your school and the fossil fuel industry that you can end?
- *Winnability:* There should be a clear path to win your demands, but it shouldn't be easy. Your demands should challenge existing norms, but not so far as to seem impossible. As you talk about your demands, also talk about potential ways to win your demands (and try to think out of the box!).
 - *Another note on winnability: Capacity is a factor! Think about the team that you have and what you're able to take on as a group, as well as how your team might need to expand or shift in order to meet your demands (or vice versa!).*
- *Cross-campus unity:* Although your fight is campus-specific, you're not alone! As you're picking demands for your campus, take inspiration and guidance from other schools. Use this [link](#) to set up a 1:1 with Campus Climate Network!

Potential Demands

After doing your research into what demands fit best into your campaign, it's time to pick your demands.

A successful campaign has both symbolic and instrumental demands.

- **Symbolic demands** are demands for a bigger picture goal. These demands focus on shaping public opinion and raising awareness about the issue the movement represents. This involves creating a shared identity and using powerful symbols to capture attention. They are less specific and actionable but rather

are a statement of direction and sentiments of the movement. There are also fewer of these demands: maximum 3-5.

- **Instrumental demands** are more concrete and aim to achieve specific, tangible outcomes. This could involve policy changes, legal reforms, or resource allocation that may be too technical to appeal to the masses or use in mass media. It's important for the campaign to be clear on the instrumental demands that fall under each symbolic demand so that you can negotiate and present clear action steps to the relevant authorities. Because these demands are technical, there can be many more instrumental demands for each symbolic demand.

Symbolic Demands	Instrumental Demands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “End reliance on fossil fuels” ● “Disassociate from the fossil fuel industry” ● “Divest from the fossil fuel industry” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decarbonization: create a comprehensive climate action plan to achieve university-wide carbon net zero by 20XX across scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions. ○ Divest the endowment from the fossil fuel industry. ○ Divest pension funds and insurance plans from the fossil fuel industry. ○ Fossil free research: Prohibit research conducted at the University from receiving funding from the fossil fuel industry and its affiliates defined as any company that earns 10% or more of its revenue from the extraction, refinement, or sale of fossil fuels and any currently-living philanthropist who has amassed a substantial amount of their wealth through the ownership or proliferation of fossil fuels. ○ Ban financial contributions from the fossil fuel industry and its affiliates (e.g. defined as any company that earns 10% or more of its revenue from the extraction, refinement, or sale of fossil fuels and any currently-living philanthropist who has amassed a substantial amount of their wealth through the ownership or proliferation of fossil fuels) to the university. ○ Remove fossil fuel affiliates from positions of leadership and instead promote leaders of local frontline communities. ○ Update facilities standards to ensure safety, dignity, & energy efficiency: LEED certification, improvements in campus accessibility/bikeability/walkability, increase on-campus housing supply ○ Ban fossil fuel companies from recruiting on campus ○ Cut ties with banks funding climate chaos (could be divestment, offering a credit union on campus, ending partnerships, etc.) ○ Ban oil and gas exploration and drilling on university-owned land.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Provide a comprehensive climate education” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a College of Climate Justice to advance research in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and reparations.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Teach the truth about the climate crisis” ● “Prepare the next generation for the climate crisis” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update general education requirements to include a climate literacy focus which provides a grounding in the basic scientific concepts of anthropogenic global warming, understanding the short- and long-term effects of climate change on human populations and global ecology, and justice-focused analysis of potential means of climate change mitigation, adaptation, reparations, and response. ○ Direct each department to comprehensively review core requirements and elective offerings for each major and create a thorough plan to integrate climate curriculum into major offerings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “[Re]invest in students, staff, and local communities” ● “Create a truly public university” ● “Prepare our community for climate disasters” ● “Recognize all university stakeholders” ● “Expand equity across the university community” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pay reparations: Assemble a task force made up of scholars of African American studies, racial justice activists, and university leaders to study payment of reparations, including cash reparations, to descendents of enslaved people employed on campus and commit \$XX million to implement the task force’s recommendations. ○ Give the land back: Return the deeds for all land upon which the university was founded to XXX tribe(s). ○ Implement and/or expand access to an on-campus food pantry to reduce student food insecurities. ○ Update admissions policies to create a diverse student body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engaging in an aggressive public awareness campaign highlighting the university’s commitment to offering free tuition for family incomes below \$XXX000. ■ Waving tuition for members of federally-recognized tribes. ■ Creating XX tenure track faculty lines focusing on recruiting faculty of color in the Ethnic Studies department. ■ Developing a bias incident reporting platform. ■ Implementing multilingual campus alerts. ■ Increasing funding for mental health services and promoting diversity within counselor staff. ○ Address the XXX county housing shortage by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing on-campus housing supply by building at least XXXX new residence units capable of housing at least XXXX students and committing to ensure that there is sufficient on-campus housing to meet the demand. ■ Reducing on-campus housing cost by XX% to relieve pressures on the local housing market.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Commitment \$XX million over the next decade to affordable housing projects in the area. ○ Offset property tax loss to the local municipality by implementing a PILOTs framework (for private institutions). ○ Increase public transit opportunities by working closely with local transit authorities to expand bus/rail/rideshare access. ○ Compensate workers fairly by committing to pay the XXXX County living wage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Democratize the university” ● “Student representation” ● “Empower students” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a student trustee position elected by students to serve on the university board trustees. ○ Increase transparency with administrative decisions. ○ Obtain and truly consider community input before making administrative decisions that would strongly impact students, staff, faculty, or the community as a whole.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Stop Poisoning Our Communities” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ End the use of inorganic pesticides and fertilizers on campus grounds. ○ Ban oil and gas exploration and drilling on university-owned land. ○ Close existing fossil fuel plants owned or operated by the university. ○ Transition all university-owned fleets to electric vehicles. ○ Replace lead piping/filter mercury contamination. ○ Replace asbestos building insulation. ○ Mandate periodic radon testing and reporting.

CAMPUS CAMPAIGNING: TIPS AND TRICKS

The Cycle of Momentum on Campus

Campuses are unique terrains to organize at because of their built-in semester or quarter system schedules. This can make it easier to think through a campaign arc and which tactics to prioritize when. Because of the influx of new students every fall, focusing on base building every fall is really important. This allows campaigns to organize new members into the movement, train them, and start developing them as new leaders. If campaigns do this base-building adequately, it positions them well to escalate at the end of the fall semester and throughout the spring to popularize its demands on a broader scale, resulting in more recruitment and a challenge to decision makers' existing policies. Make sure this escalation is strategic around moments of intervention such as board

meetings and elections. Also be aware of times when students are busy during midterms and finals. Note major campus events like big sports games, convocation, commencement, etc.

Narrative Strategy

Story-telling and narrative strategy are central to any campaign. They articulate your “why,” communicate your shared values, and center collective action. Ultimately, your power lies in your ability to clearly communicate stories and use them to convey a sense of urgency. As you build your campaign, ground yourselves in the story you want to communicate to both your base and your broader campus.

Stories: Public Narrative

One helpful framework for campaign story-telling is [Marshall Genz’s Public Narrative framework](#). This framework is made of three components:

1. **A Story of Self**, which articulates the values that bring you to leadership in your campaign.
2. **A Story of Us**, which articulates the shared values grounding your campaign.
3. **A Story of Now**, which articulates a challenge to those values that necessitates immediate action.

Strategy: Media Arc

Now, consider how the way in which you communicate these stories changes in each phase of your campaign arc. Will the rhetoric you use in meetings and actions intensify? How will the images you share on social media complement your demands?

For each quarter, **write out** key messaging points for your story and how they will be clearly communicated in:

- Earned media (school newspapers, radio stations, student government communications, local publications).
- Opinion pieces (written by a variety of base members).
- Socials (infographics, photos, action-related content).

Check out this [Generic Hub Media Arc](#) from Sunrise UNC for a great example! (Note: they divided their arc into months rather than quarters, which is also totally an option!)

Dealing with Admin

Your administration is typically your target for your campaign (see the [Picking your Targets](#) section). Your administration will try to distract you to make sure your campaign is not run. However, university administrators are key decision makers for our demands, so you will need to engage with your administration in some capacity. Depending on your relationship with your administration, you may want to employ more ‘targeted tactics’ to call out your administration as opposed to working directly with them.

How to Navigate Losing

Losing is part of the campaign process. It is actually a good thing to get a “no” response from your administration. Thus, you should ask your administration first to get your “no”. You might get some easy wins for your campaign, but your administration will not say yes to everything. You can use a “no” response to ramp up your campaign and get others to see that administration does not have students’ best interests in mind.

There are many other important outcomes beyond just victories that come out of campaigns. Often the biggest impact movements have is not their concrete policy wins, but instead might be the power and relationships they build and shifting past conventions about what is possible and popular. Don’t get down if you don’t get your demands, instead grieve, reflect, and assess how you can use the power and relationships you built through your current campaign to launch and win your next one.

See the “[Escalate](#)” section for more information on how to ramp up your campaign after you get a “no” from administration.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Case Studies

Harvard Living Wage Campaign

The Harvard Living Wage Campaign was a multiyear campaign led by students at Harvard University, culminating in a multi-week sit-in at the president and university administrators offices, in which 48 students refused to leave until workers received living wages. The campaign’s target was the university president and members of the Harvard Corporation, the decision-makers at the world’s richest university. As the size of Harvard’s endowment surpassed \$19 billion, the janitors, security guards, and dining hall staff were making less than \$10 an hour.

Before staging the sit-in, students completed extensive research over 2.5 years into the rates paid to campus workers by various subcontractors, comparing this with the local cost of living. They canvassed the student body, circulated petitions, coordinated with unions, and held one-on-one meetings with university faculty, staff, and alumni. The university created a committee in response to the campaign which, for a year, discussed and debated the idea of a living wage before ultimately rejecting it outright.

This was the context in which the sit-in, which took over 2 months of planning, began. At first, there was little student support beyond a core group of students leading the campaign. However, after a few days of the sit-in, that changed. Students held solidarity rallies in the Harvard yard in support of the campaign. Senator Ted Kennedy unexpectedly showed up on Harvard’s campus on the third day of the sit-in to support the campaign and senior officials in the National AFL-CIO endorsed the campaign.

Before starting the sit-in, students had cultivated relationships with national and local press contacts in the years leading up to the sit-in, which they capitalized on as the action commenced. The campaign was ultimately covered by every major network and newspaper in the country, receiving endorsements in the New York Times. Importantly, although students tried to carefully plan for different scenarios before the sit-in began, the campaign ultimately became so expansive that any one person, or even group of people, could not have full knowledge of everything that was going on at once. People took action to support and move forward the campaign, unprompted by its initial core group of organizers; they took ownership over and identified with the campaign. 400 professors signed a letter supporting the campaign that ran as an ad in the Boston Globe, students led teach-ins, and crowds showed up for a barbeque in Harvard Yard. Eventually, the president and the Harvard Corporation caved under the pressure, agreeing symbolically to the campaign's demand of a living wage. A year later, a contract was signed, with workers getting paid \$11 an hour.

NYU Divestment Campaign Case Study

In 2012, students at NYU started organizing for fossil fuel divestment following Bill McKibben's 'Do The Math' tour. The NYU Divest campaign had a variety of direct actions including an occupation of the student center stairwell and a blockade of the elevator to the NYU President's office. After years of protest, the NYU Board refused to divest. In 2021, new students took on the campaign. For three years, they held mass protests and rallies, collected over 2,000 signatures of NYU community members on a petition, and received over 20 endorsements from local orgs. After over a year of meeting with school administrators regularly while continuing outside pressure, we were offered a meeting with the Investments Committee of the NYU Board of Trustees. Four members of Sunrise NYU prepared intensely for the meeting, spending 2 months on strategy for the conversation. In August of 2023, the NYU Chair of the Board, Bill Berkley, announced fossil fuel divestment with a letter addressed to Sunrise NYU. Full story [here!](#)



Green New Deal for American University

In the fall of 2022, students in Sunrise American University decided that running an on-campus campaign would be a key next step, but after winning divestment in 2021 and the university achieving 'carbon neutrality' in 2020. They were unsure what campus campaign to run next. Inspired by the national movement for a Green New Deal,

students decided to run a Green New Deal campaign. This first step in running this campaign was better understanding what the student body needed, where AU was falling short, and imagining a campus where everyone could thrive. To do this, students conducted visioning sessions, facilitated discussions that aimed to answer the question: “What does a Green New Deal for our campus look like?”

From the visioning sessions and a few months of research, students wrote the Green New Deal for American University Policy Platform, a document that lays out the vision for a fossil free campus in which students, faculty, and staff can thrive. Students launched the policy platform along with a petition to get the question, “Should American University enact a Green New Deal for American University?” on the student government ballot as a referendum. The launch of the petition was accompanied by weeks of tabling and outreach and Sunrise AU surpassed their goal of 400 student signatures, winning a spot for the question on the ballot. Next, it was time to make sure the referendum passed. Students organized a rally, inviting professors and students in allied organizations to speak. The rally kicked off just as polls opened and from there, the word was spread. When the results were announced, the referendum passed by an overwhelming margin, with 83% of students having voted in favor of a Green New Deal for AU.



UC Berkeley Organic Pilot Project

When two students on the UC Berkeley beach volleyball team discovered that the area surrounding their court had been sprayed with Ranger Pro, a glyphosate-based product that is a risk to public and environmental health, they knew they had to do something about it. Initially, they asked the Supervisor of Athletics Fields & Turf to end spraying by the courts, and in return, the team would pick the surrounding weeds. But they knew they had to make a lasting, institutional change. They reached out to the grounds team and began to discuss solutions. The students secured grant funding to bring in an organic expert to oversee two organic pilot projects, sites that served as a proof of concept and that provided space for the grounds team to become comfortable implementing organic, soil based practices. The pilot projects took 2-3 years to completely transition to healthy, dense organically managed turf. Impressed with the results and equipped with new knowledge, the grounds team expanded the organic practices to the entirety of campus. Now UC Berkeley’s campus is almost entirely managed without toxic pesticides. The two students decided that they needed to take this beyond UC Berkeley and oversaw a successful advocacy campaign that included a petition and letter targeting the UC Regents to get glyphosate

banned on all ten UC Campuses. Their advocacy resulted in a System-wide Pesticide Oversight Committee. Learn more [here](#).

Working with Off-Campus Groups

Working with off-campus groups can prove an essential part of your campaign, depending on your demands. As you engage with the community beyond your university, it is important to center building *reciprocal* and *consistent* relationships, and recognize your role as a student in the context of these relationships.

Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing

The Jemez Principles were developed at a 1996 meeting of 40 environmental justice organizers in Jemez, New Mexico with the goal of naming common understandings between large environmental NGOs and grassroots organizations. Today, these guidelines remain a critical framework in guiding relationships between student groups and the surrounding community.

Read the full principles [here](#) and check out [this worksheet](#) for guidance on how to apply these principles directly to your group / campaign.

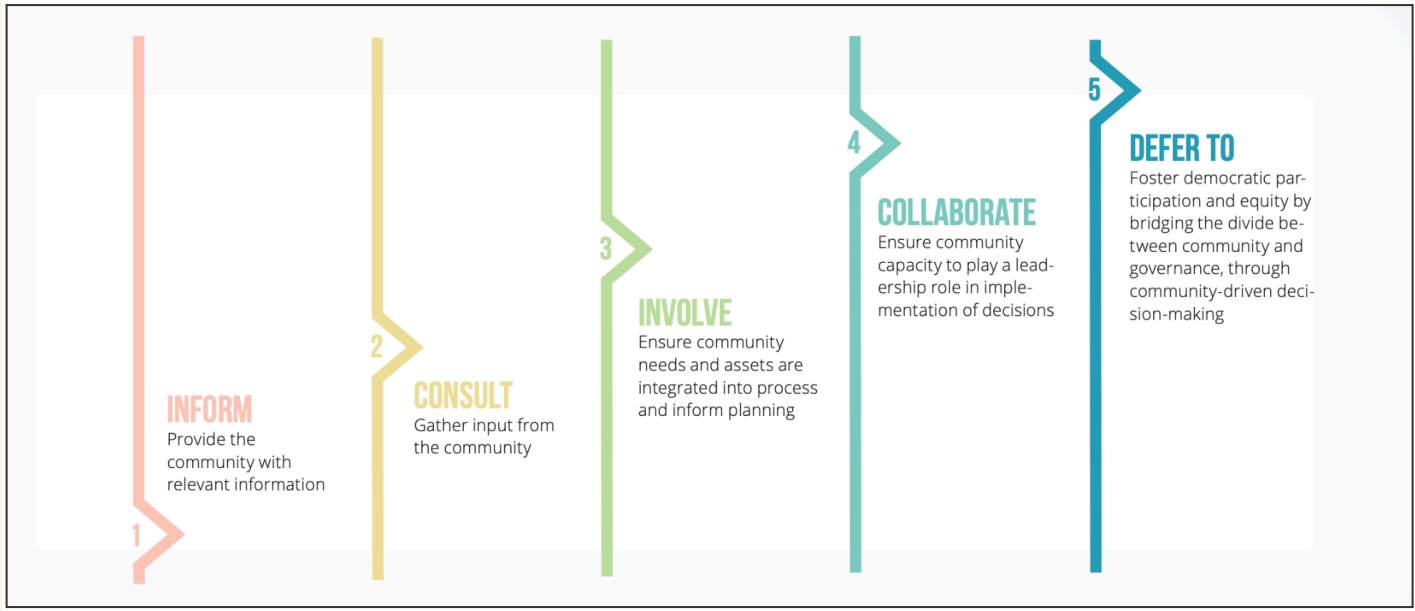
1. Be Inclusive
2. Emphasis on Bottom-Up Organizing
3. Let People Speak for Themselves
4. Work Together in Solidarity and Mutuality
5. Build Just Relationships Among Ourselves
6. Commitment to Self-Transformation

The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

It is important to view engagement with off-campus groups as falling along a continuum, rather than in a binary. Originally developed to facilitate community participation with local governments, policymakers, and nonprofits in climate solutions planning, this spectrum acts as another framework to guide engagement with off-campus groups in advocating for a Green New Deal for Campus.

Not *all* parts of your campaign will directly handle how your university relates to its immediate surrounding community. For example, demanding that your university divests its endowment from fossil fuel companies does not necessarily require partnerships with community groups. However, for parts of your campaign that deal with local environmental justice issues, this spectrum provides an essential framework.

Refer to the full framework [here](#).



Examples of where a Green New Deal for Campus campaign would function at each step of the spectrum:

1. **Inform:** (one-way information sharing) sharing information about your Green New Deal campaign and how it may benefit community members; asking for their support for the campaign without any effort to create a relationship in the process.
2. **Consult:** (tokenization of groups) asking for input from community groups on your Green New Deal campaign (i.e. “fill out this survey to let us know what you’d like to see out of our university!”) but not *involving* community groups in any other part of the process, even if part of the campaign is relevant to them.
3. **Involve:** (integrating community needs and assets into the planning process) hosting a series of visioning sessions with community members in relation to local issues and/or attending relevant community meetings
4. **Collaborate:** (community groups play a leading role in not only deciding demands but carrying through implementation) community leaders are directly involved with leading calls for specific changes to university practices in relation to local environmental justice issues, such as community-based research practices, university land-use, etc.
5. **Defer to:** (democratize processes that foster community-driven decision making) your GND4C coalition has active, regular participation by members of community groups relevant to your demands and local groups hold equal voting power.

Green New Deal for Campus Talking Points

While we all love the GND and want to see it implemented at our universities, there are going to be some who do not agree with us. Here are some common arguments against the GND and how you can go about refuting:

“We don’t have money”

The [Inflation Reduction Act](#), which was passed in 2022, contains vast opportunities for grants and federal money

for universities to work towards parts of a GND for your campus. The GND is an aspirational policy that can, and most likely will, take the university many years to implement fully. Take a look at what your university prioritizes its money on (sports, greek life, etc.) and use those as examples to argue that the university does have money to invest in its students and should be doing so in GND policies.

“The left is too woke”

GND policies receive support from [significant majorities](#) of Americans. However, should you receive this rebuttal, a well laid-out policy platform in which each demand is justified should neutralize this argument. Also, make sure to seek support from large amounts of students, staff, and faculty to show that the GND for your campus has support and people in the community want to see it implemented.

“We should be doing things off our campus only”

Universities have historically been at the forefront of social change. As members of our university communities, we have more leverage to influence university level decision-making than anywhere else. When we win on campuses, the world takes notice. Campus-level wins directly generate momentum for local, state, and federal wins.

Media Coverage

The media is *not* your audience, it is a *tool* to reach your audience. Here are some resources on media coverage:

- [Media Training for Student Organizers](#)
- [NYU Press Release Guide](#)

Other Guidebooks & Resources

[Sunrise Movement Hub Resources Directory](#): Access action guides, training materials, leadership development, and visual strategy.

Organizing Resources

- [Sunrise 1:1 Guide](#): How to have a 1:1 for recruitment, retention, and agitation.
- [Green New Deal for Schools Guide](#): A similar guide to this one, but for K-12 schools.
- [Meeting Facilitation Resource](#): How to run a productive, inclusive meeting.
- [Action Strategy](#): How to plan a smart action.
- [Nonviolent Direct Actions](#): A list of 198 methods of nonviolent direct actions.
- [Recruitment](#): How to get people to join your organization.

EJ Resources

- [Sunrise Brown Environmental Justice Guide](#): How to center environmental justice in your organization.
- [Principles of Environmental Justice](#): From the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, 1991.
- [Solidarity Organizing Toolkit](#): How to organize in solidarity with frontline communities.

Fossil-Free Research Resources

- [Fossil Free Research Guide](#): Fossil free research guide from Campus Climate Network.
- [Campus-Based Reports](#): Fossil free research campus reports.

Divestment Resources

- [Divestment Guide](#): Basics of divestment campaigns.
- [Fossil Free Handbook](#): Divestment handbook from 350.org.

Funding Resources

- [IRA Decarbonization](#): How to use IRA benefits to decarbonize your campus.
- [A GND Guide to Direct Pay for Cities](#): How local governments can use federal funds for progressive priorities.

Other Resources

- [Sunrise Movement Glossary](#): Glossary with jargon explanations.
- [Campaign in a Box](#): General campaign how-to's.
- [Parks for a Sustainable Future](#)
- [Tools for Change](#): How to organize against pesticide usage.

Reach out to kmackert@campusclimatenetwork.org for any comments, suggestions, or feedback on this guide.

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